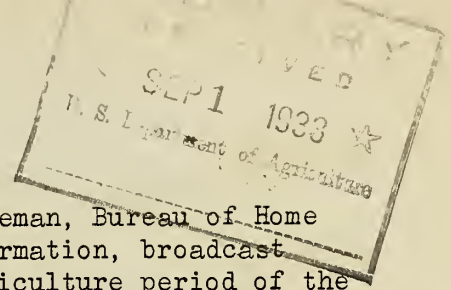


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VEGETABLE PLATES



A radio conversation between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, August 18, 1938, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, by the National Broadcasting Company and a network of 93 associate radio stations.

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WALLACE KADDERLY:

First of all, here's our representative from the Bureau of Home Economics, Ruth Van Deman. By the way, Ruth--do you believe in dreams?

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

Well--sometimes--but what do dreams have to do with home economics?

KADDERLY:

Well, I had one last night that was made almost entirely of home economics. Of course--there was a little agriculture in it, too. I dreamed that I was in a big field, entirely surrounded by great big ears of sweet corn. Each one as big as a man.

VAN DEMAN:

You must have thought you were Paul Bunyan--Well, I can think of much worse places to be; either asleep or awake.

KADDERLY:

This sweet corn was certainly beautiful. It had had plenty of rain, to fill the kernels full of juice.

VAN DEMAN:

And lots of bright sunshine to make it sweet--

KADDERLY:

Yes--and cool nights to keep the sugar from turning to starch. These roasting ears had been cooked until they were a rich golden yellow color--and they were just dripping with rich butter. I kept reaching--and reaching--and just as I was getting close enough to touch one of these luscious ears of sweet corn--

VAN DEMAN:

I'll bet you woke up.

KADDERLY:

Say--you must have been in that field.

VAN DEMAN:

No--but dreams always end that way.

KADDERLY:

How would you account for a dream of that kind--about sweet corn?

(over)

VAN DEMAN:

You must have had some for dinner.

KADDERLY:

No--I'm afraid not. Haven't had any for a week.

VAN DEMAN:

Then maybe you were hungry for it.

KADDERLY:

Well--not especially.

VAN DEMAN:

Then you must have known that I was going to talk about vegetable plates today. Thanks for getting me started--we'll make sweet corn the first item in our vegetable plate. Corn-on-the-cob--something that's cooked in a jiffy and served "as is", no fussy seasoning to worry the cook.

KADDERLY:

And doesn't sweet corn stick to the ribs pretty well in a vegetable meal?

VAN DEMAN:

That depends on how much butter you "melt over all".

KADDERLY:

But aside from the butter isn't corn in the starchy, calorie class?

VAN DEMAN:

It is. And a vegetable plate needs one starchy vegetable. But it's the fat that digests more slowly than the starch, and gives food that "staying" quality. I like to include a fried vegetable too. How would French fried onions strike you?

KADDERLY:

Right in the bullseye. They'd add zing.

VAN DEMAN:

Zing. That's a good word for onion flavor.

KADDERLY:

And they'd be good and crunchy, too.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, crunch is needed on a vegetable plate. Evidently you don't like a plateful of soft vegetables any better than I do.

KADDERLY:

No, I like to exercise the molars. I want some of my vegetables crisp, and some chevy, and some baked and some boiled.

VAN DEMAN:

Excellent. Keep going.

KADDERLY:

And not all of 'em looking alike.

VAN DEMAN:

You want a variety of colors, you mean.

KADDERLY:

I guess that's it. Eye appeal.

VAN DEMAN:

All right. Here we've got white or creamy yellow sweet corn, and crunchy golden brown French fried onions. Fried eggplant would be good there too. How about some shredded green snap beans?

KADDERLY:

Rather have broccoli.

VAN DEMAN:

Very good, if we can get it. The market's a little shy on leafy greens right now in most places. Would you take crisp cabbage slaw if we couldn't get the broccoli?

KADDERLY:

With pleasure. But if it's cold slaw, please serve it in a separate dish.

VAN DEMAN:

We'll do that. I don't like cold salad vegetables on hot plates either.

KADDERLY:

The vitamins don't go down so well when they're wilted.

VAN DEMAN:

And now for a dash of bright color, something red or orange. Baked tomatoes maybe?

KADDERLY:

Check. Or carrots. I'm one of those queer fellows who never had to be bribed to eat carrots.

VAN DEMAN:

Good. Or Harvard beets would be good for color and tart flavor.

KADDERLY:

Why do they call those Harvard beets? Are they supposed to give you the Ha - va - d accent?

VAN DEMAN:

I think it's the crimson for dear old Harvard. At least that's my guess. The vinegar in the sauce brings that red color back.

KADDERLY:

You mean vinegar makes a beet redder?

VAN DEMAN:

I do. When beets are boiled in water the red color fades, but a spoonful of vinegar or lemon juice brings it back. Regular chemical action on the red color pigments. The same thing happens when you cook red cabbage.

KADDERLY:

Well, how about a rasher or two or bacon on a vegetable plate? That allowed?

VAN DEMAN:

Why not?

KADDERLY:

Or an egg?

VAN DEMAN:

Certainly. Or cheese. Or some frizzled dried beef. Or a little fish in a potato cake.

KADDERLY:

They're not exactly of vegetable origin.

VAN DEMAN:

No, but we're not herbivorous animals either. A vegetable plate isn't a diet. It's a meal. Just an occasional meal in the thousand or so a home-maker plans in any year.

KADDERLY:

I suppose it is quite a chore to think up something new every day.

VAN DEMAN:

But the dozens and dozens of vegetables we grow in this broad land of ours are a big help.

KADDERLY:

How many dozens are there I wonder. I never counted up.

VAN DEMAN:

I did, just for fun the other day in our bulletin on cooking vegetables, I thought I'd see how many kinds were listed in the time table.

KADDERLY:

How many did you find?

VAN DEMAN:

Forty-six.

KADDERLY:

Forty-six. I suppose everything from asparagus - - -

VAN DEMAN:

Artichokes. Artichokes, Globe and Jerusalem, come first.

KADDERLY:

O.K. Artichokes to - - - to - - -

VAN DEMAN:

Zucchini.

KADDERLY:

Zucchini? Italian squash!

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, and a squash that's getting to be very popular. They're very good panned. But I don't think the bulletin mentions them by name.

KADDERLY:

I never heard of panned squash.

VAN DEMAN:

That's a very good way to quick cook a lot of vegetables. Okra for instance is very good done that way. Just melt a little butter or other fat in a heavy skillet, and stir in the vegetable after it's been sliced. Let it brown a little. Then put the lid on the pan, and let the vegetable cook slowly in its own steam for about 15 minutes, till it gets tender but not too soft. Panned cabbage or kale is good with a little milk or cream added. And a dusting of flour if the juice needs thickening.

KADDERLY:

Sounds very good.

VAN DEMAN:

I can recommend it, unconditionally.

KADDERLY:

And may I recommend unconditionally that anybody who's in doubt about how long to cook 46 kinds of vegetables, send for your bulletin?

VAN DEMAN:

You may.

KADDERLY:

Very well. And thank you very, very much, Ruth Van Deman. And anybody who wants a copy of the bulletin called--"Conserving Food Value, Flavor, and Attractiveness in Cooking Vegetables" send a card to Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Just for good measure, I'll repeat that bulletin title--"Conserving Food Value, Flavor and Attractiveness in Cooking Vegetables." It's free for the asking if you send a card to the Bureau of Home Economics, of the Department of Agriculture, here in Washington, D. C.

